

ADRIENNE

MARY

ISABEL

WYMORE

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# ADRIENNE

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

MARY ISABEL WYMORE



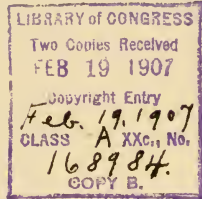
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## TO MY TRUE FRIEND

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To her whose kind sympathy and aid have been the inspiration of this work—I dedicate these poems.

*“ Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:  
The soul that rises with us, our life’s Star,  
Hath had elsewhere its setting,  
And cometh from afar.”—Wordsworth.*

These poems are arranged in the order in which they were written, thus making an unbroken chain in the development of an idea.



## CONTENTS.

	<i>Page</i>
<i>Adrienne</i> . . . . .	7
<i>Spring</i> . . . . .	14
<i>Egotism</i> . . . . .	16
<i>Elva; or, The South-Wind's Tale</i> . .	17
<i>Keep My Faith</i> . . . . .	20
<i>The Eternal Mystery</i> . . . . .	20
<i>The Universe</i> . . . . .	22
<i>The Winter's Promise</i> . . . . .	26
<i>What is Better than Success?</i> . . .	26
<i>No, Not a Cynic</i> . . . . .	27
<i>The Lost Glory</i> . . . . .	27
<i>When Hope is Gone</i> . . . . .	30
<i>Glimmerings through the Mist</i> . .	33
<i>Atheism</i> . . . . .	35
<i>Good-Night</i> . . . . .	43



## ADRIENNE

'Tis a simple tale, a tale of the sea,  
And if, as ye read, it seems to be  
More than an idle tale, then take  
It as murmurings strange that the waters make,—  
Voices heard in the sounding waves,  
Rising from deep-hid ocean caves.  
Interpret the story as ye will,  
'Tis only a simple sea-tale still.

### I

Once there lived by the surging sea  
A maiden wondrous fair;  
White as the very sea-foam was she,  
Like the sun her shining hair.  
And nothing she did the livelong day  
But sit beside the surge;  
And e'en when the storm-winds flung the spray,  
Still clung she to the verge.  
Though the booming swell  
In thunder spoke;  
Though blinding fell  
The rain, and broke  
The waves on the rocky shore:  
Still she dreamed there evermore.  
But the sea-gulls thick around her flying  
Hoarsely were ever their warning crying;  
"Adrienne, Adrienne,  
Oh, when, oh, when  
Will you wake and cease your dreaming?"

And they hovered and ducked and soared on high,  
And swooped upon her with their cry,  
And filled the air with screaming.  
But Adrienne, unheeding, kept  
Her eyes fixed on the sea,  
Though all around the tempest swept,  
And the white-caps tossed in glee.

## II

There, ever and ever, day on day,  
The lonely maiden sat,  
Yearning and wishing and longing aye  
For something, she knew not what.  
In all things as a child was she;  
A spirit bright but lone,  
She had never tasted misery,  
No grief had she ever known  
Save the mystic silence that bound her close,  
And the wind that breathed of love,  
And the longings, unbid, that within her rose,  
And the calls of the birds above:  
“Adrienne, Adrienne,  
Oh, when, oh, when  
Will you cease your idle dreaming?”  
For thus the sea-gulls wheeling o’erhead  
Were forever and ever screaming;  
And the silence in clearer accents said:  
“Alas, forever dreaming!”

### III

One morn a ship, all ghostly gray,  
Came sailing, silently sailing  
Out of the west at break of day;  
Its top a mist was veiling.  
As it nearer drew, it caught the beams  
Of the sun, and shone snow-white,  
Skimming the glistening breakers, meseems,  
Like a bird, with passage light.  
On the shore, Adrienne, in wonder bound,  
Saw this moving shape come gliding;  
And a faint little whisper of joyous sound  
Stirred her soul as she saw it sliding  
Silently, smoothly, o'er the deep.  
No longer her voice was chained in sleep,  
But wild 'round the cliff it rang;  
For the first, first time, so gladly sweet,  
In her nameless joy, she sang,  
That willingly sailors their death would meet,—  
Entranced as of old by the Siren's tones,—  
To hear that voice from amongst the stones.

### IV

But suddenly over the sea there rushed  
A gale so chilling cold  
That the voice of Adrienne was hushed.  
The peals of thunder rolled  
From cliff to cliff, with awful sound,  
Like a giant's mutterings  
Of rage; and the wakened waves resound  
With sullen roar, that brings

A pallor to the sailor's cheek,  
As by the lightning's glare  
He rises,—in such an hour how weak!—  
The ocean's worst to dare.  
The blackness of twenty nights is come  
O'er the sea, with all it bears,  
And a line of merciless, pounding foam  
With the rocky cliff mad wars.  
There, shrouded in the gathering gloom,  
Her wind-blown tresses flying,  
Her hands outstretched in wild affright,  
Her bright eyes dimmed with crying,  
While the rain beats down on her fair young head,  
And a fitful glare is upon her shed  
By the zigzag lightning playing,  
Stands Adrienne, with wild, wild woe  
Struck mute, and dumbly praying  
All powers that be, above, below,  
To save that ship from its dreadful doom,  
And send once more the grateful light.  
Ah, Adrienne,  
'Twas then, 'twas then  
You awoke from your idle dreaming!  
Adrienne, Adriennne,  
'Twas then, 'twas then,  
With the lightning o'er you streaming!

## V

In vain, in vain, that prayer was blown  
Across the raging brine;  
But if God saw fit that the ship go down,  
Adrienne, 'twas no fault of thine.



While the horrible din of cries and groans,  
Of shrieks for help, of despairing moans  
Of souls wrenched hard away  
From the clasp of the wonted clay,  
Did with violent agony sway  
That slender young form, which the spray  
Had drenched with brine; and away  
O'er the sea did her hopeless gaze stray,  
Straining in wild dismay  
To catch, by the lightning's play,  
A glimpse of the ship so gray,  
Ere it sunk beneath the wave,  
To find a watery grave  
For the ones she could not save,—  
God in mercy cleared away  
The clouds, and sent sunny day  
O'er waters of purest blue,  
Which never a faint trace knew  
Of the winds that raged and blew,  
And wrecked, within the view  
Of the lonely girl, the ship;  
And she saw, with quivering lip,  
That beneath these ripples fair,  
Sparkling in the sunny air,  
Down in the waters there,  
Was it lying, with all it bare.

## VI

Ay, the storm had cleared, and the sun shone red  
O'er the breakers white with foam.  
How fast the thunderous clouds had sped!—  
No slower had they come.

Glad summer took within her fold  
    Sea, sky, and land, and all;  
No longer the heaving billows rolled,  
    No more did the torrents fall.  
Only that surface dimpling there.—  
    So fair, so calm, so mild,—  
Looked as innocent 'neath the golden air  
    As if it had never, in wild,  
Mad rage sent down to eternal sleep  
    The sailors brave who rode  
Over its treacherous waters deep,—  
    Ah, me!—to their long abode:  
Leaving their loved ones behind to weep  
    That they ever had dared to confide  
    Their lives to the ocean wide.

## VII

The maiden knelt on the beach awhile,  
    Sobbing in piteous grief;  
Then heedless of all the false sea's guilt,  
    Sundered from all belief,  
She mournfully sank upon the sands,  
    And bathed her limbs in the tide;  
Wearily looped up the scattered strands  
    Of hair, and in sorrow sighed.  
So bright a hope had come and gone,  
    So glad a dream was o'er,  
That the weight of the pain thus thrust upon  
    Her, unused as she was, seemed more  
    Than her gentle heart could bear;  
    So bowed she in despair.

## VIII

But as, o'ercome, she lay in pain,  
    Good God a blessing sent, as sweet  
As a bud of spring, or the gentle rain  
    That feeds the bud; for, flung at her feet,  
The One lay upon the wave-licked sands,  
    His ghastly face upturned;  
She softly stroked it with timid hands,  
    While the heart within her burned.  
She holds him in her tender arms,  
    And gazes in mute bliss,  
While the cold, cold form she sweetly warms,  
    And seals the lids with a kiss.  
Once, twice, and thrice, in wond'ring joy,  
    She kissed the marble brow  
And the golden tresses of the boy,  
    And the cheek as white as snow,  
While deep love into her lonely soul  
Softly, quietly, tenderly stole,  
    Bringing its own sweet, brooding peace;  
And the smiling sun shed o'er the whole  
    His healing beams, nor did he cease  
Till he warmed the maiden's kneeling form,  
    And lit with a radiant light  
    The brow so smooth and white  
Of the Beautiful One sent by the storm;  
Till at last in mercy there came a wave  
    From the heart of the briny deep,  
That bore them both to a happy grave  
    And the joy of a peaceful sleep.  
There, deep in the Ocean's tranquil breast,  
    No more to moan or weep,

While the waves their tireless vigils keep,  
They are gently lulled to eternal rest.  
But where is the soul, a pining guest  
While here by the chains of flesh suppressed?

## SPRING

Warm is the breath of the South-wind,  
Waking in meadow and glade  
Sweet little modest blossoms  
Timid in sun or shade.

Blue is the sky and smiling;  
Calm is the day, and fair;  
The woodland music is ringing  
Glad in the sunny air.

Spring is born in the meadow,  
Spring is born in the glade;  
Spring soft plays in the sunshine,  
Spring rests cool in the shade.

Through the day and the night-time  
Ever one song is sung:  
Love is born in its beauty,  
Again is the old earth young.

Well may the soul look upward  
Through its spiritual eyes,  
Far beyond the hazy snow-drifts  
And the sunny blue of the skies,

And catch the distant glimmer  
Of a land all clothed in light,  
Which knows no stormy winter,  
And is always equally bright.

There, haply, the pure and the sin-stained  
Will mingle glad and free,  
See the same glistening rainbow,  
Rest 'neath the same green tree,

Breathe the same fragrant odors,  
List to the same sweet songs,  
And out in Heaven's sunshine  
Bury their pains and wrongs:

E'en as the earth, recreated,  
With her stains all washed away,  
In her beauty pure rejoices  
All the soft-rippling day.

When dying eyes are closing,  
And faint grows the mortal breath,  
And faded and old are the garments  
Of flesh, and rigid in death,

Then will the blessed mem'ry  
Of Spring in her gladsome green  
Steal o'er the dulling senses  
With a touch of joy serene;

And, a smile on his face, the dying  
Will close his eyes in peace,  
Hoping to taste the sweetness  
Of a Spring that will never cease.

## EGOTISM

“ Hespera, hast thou not noted oft  
How now spots, fleecy white and soft,  
And dazzling bright in the sun; now clear,  
Dark spaces of curious shape, appear,

Which anon are veiled in mist again,  
As light or shadows now and then  
Glide o’er the face of that orb afar ?  
Much do I wonder what they are.”

“ Ay, Anelida; the wise men say  
That yon is a world like ours, and they  
Would have us believe that beings there  
Like unto us,—as wise, as fair,—

Are dwelling; but I think only Mars,  
Of all the myriads of shining stars,  
Folds to its breast an intelligent race,  
And raises to heaven a living face.”

“ Hespera, thou art quick of speech;  
Be not so hasty, I pray, to teach  
That in all the universe, wide and vast,  
The one germ of life on our orb was cast.”

## ELVA; OR, THE SOUTH-WIND'S TALE

### I

There is a valley, snugly closed  
By sentinel hills around;  
There the sunshine streams,  
And the water gleams;  
There the sunny stillness calm reposed,—  
The south-wind the only sound,—  
When wandering through it I heard a voice,  
And I listened. Now sweet and clear,  
And anon, like the breath of a mere  
Wind, did it come; but it did rejoice  
My heart, to hear it speak  
Of a maiden, bright, but weak  
And lonely, who lived in this valley fair,  
And longed to fly to the purer air.  
And this is the tale the south-wind told  
Of the maiden's fate in the days of old.

### II

The rising East was bathed in a crimson glow,  
And inch by inch the Earth's dark shadow crept  
Farther and farther into the West, where slept  
Still soundly weary lands beneath its bow  
Of night. The morning wind blew cool  
And sweet o'er meadow and dreaming pool,  
Rustling the leafy trees,  
And tossing bright, waving seas  
Of grass. Then softly one stole away

From her bed, uneasy with dreams  
Too bright for her peace, or meseems,  
Too vexed for her tender years,  
Too harassed by lonely tears.  
In the early dawn of the green Spring day,  
Half-wakened, and dreamy with sleep,  
She strayed by the whispering stream,  
And watched the glad sunrise gleam  
Golden on lofty steep,  
Then bathe in its flood the glen,  
And the dwellings of drowsy men.

### III

Warmer and warmer grew the light;  
Farther and farther retreated the night.  
    Wrapped warm in the sunny air  
    And the south-wind, Elva fair  
    Lingered long by the streamlet's side.  
In a brooding calm she wandered there,  
And bent on the waters a musing stare,  
    And viewed the heavens serene and wide,  
Which, smiling above her,—deep and blue,  
As if they never a shadow knew  
Save the downy clouds that drifted slow  
Across them,—seemed, in a voice so low  
That dull-eared men would have heard no sound  
    but the wind, to say:  
    “Come, gentle soul, and let thine innocence  
    Be safely folded in my love intense,  
Before the stony, thirsty deserts line thy lonely way.”



#### IV

The maiden heard, and lifting up her face  
In its dewy purity and youthful grace,  
She gently answered: " Bear me, O sweet wind,  
Up to the skies; we'll leave the earth behind,—  
The earth, homely mother of my infancy;  
Even as thou callest, beauteous Heaven,  
To thine airy heights I'll gladly go with thee,  
For to me a lonely lot is given.  
There on thy loving breast  
I'll lie in eternal rest."

#### V

She spoke, nor spoke again, nor ever more  
Was Elva seen beside that dreamy shore.  
Whence she vanished no one ever knew;  
But the sunny south-wind the truth would slyly  
tell,  
And the secret smiled from the heavens blue.  
At least, she was gone forever from that dell.  
Yet in some sunny place,  
Some serene and airy space,  
I doubt not doth she dwell.

#### VI

And then, methought, when love here on this orb  
Seeketh, unresting, for immortality,  
Even as the heavens did her soul absorb  
In their wide mystery, so with Love 'twill be.

## KEEP MY FAITH!

O thou Unknown Power,  
Whose mysterious sway my spirit feels, with awe:  
E'en in my darkest hour,  
Still grant me strength to read thy divine law  
Of equal peace and joy for all;  
Oh, keep my faith, whate'er befall!

Still let me see the light,  
Far, far above me, where the sunny sky  
Melts away before the sight;  
Still let me feel that somewhere, lie  
Fair morning lands of constant peace,  
Where love and spring-time never cease!

## THE ETERNAL MYSTERY

Life and life!—near, yet apart!  
What the mystery  
Which binds them thus, when heart on heart  
Each longs to be,  
One with another? Alas, in vain,  
Through all the ages,  
Have we chased joy and suffered pain,  
Still divided pages!  
Each yearns to blend with another; yet  
Each separate stays;  
All fruitlessly each strives to get  
Within the maze.  
What is life, that flows around us swift,

A turbid stream,  
From whose distant banks the fogs ne'er lift,  
Nor does a beam  
Of sunshine melt the mist ahead  
That guards the mouth,  
Nor is a radiance freshly shed  
O'er its lost youth?  
Ah, me! The ages sing no lay  
But only this,—  
That what has been is gone away,  
And that what is  
Will not be soon, and what shall be  
Soon will flee,  
And what we've seen we'll no more see,  
For the new will be.  
But there's a voice within the heart  
Whispering still,  
That what now pains us will depart,  
And that there will  
Sometime be what we've longed for aye;  
That yet the time  
Shall come, the dawn of a brighter day,  
In a sunnier clime.  
With reason stern the voice combat,  
And 'tis hushed;  
Yet faith remains still, for all that,—  
Never crushed.

## THE UNIVERSE

See, all around us are moving myriad orbs,  
Each a rolling world, like to our own, with seas,  
Perhaps, and sunny skies, and verdant fields,  
That fill the air with mingled sweet, fresh smells  
Of sprouting herbs; with breathing, active forms  
Of animal life, that roam the lands, or swim  
The seas, or sail the heavens wide and free;  
With beings full of intelligent fire, whose eyes  
Glow with a thinking light and earnest mood;  
With beauteous shapes it hurts the soul to see,—  
Clad in the dangerous garment of mortal flesh;—  
(We weep that it cannot last, what is so fair);—  
Bright faces that smile a space and flit away,—  
One moment warm with the soul's best glow, the  
next

All quenched to ashes pale. Who knows what  
lives

Have hung a doubtful period near the brink  
Of death's dark chasm,—as do we all,—and then  
Have fainted and fallen from the verge? what  
pains,

What joys, what sorrows, what rewards, what  
hopes,

What cold despair, what passions mad, what strong,  
Wild wishes, sins, and evil deeds; what high,  
Pure, noble depths of soul; what weakness sad,  
That fell, too frail to fight; what mortal pangs  
And yearnings, in those unknown worlds afar,  
Have burned, have faded, glowed, and flickered,  
till

That mystery that none may fathom stilled  
Them all for aye?

There, where the glittering stars  
Shine on our earth tonight like smiles that pierce  
The awful blackness for friendly comfort's sake:  
Look up, and tell me: do they not bring faith?—  
Those pensive smiles, those peaceful smiles, those  
smiles

That seem to speak of calmness wrested hard  
From the grip of pain, and peace serene, at last  
Won, spite of all that interposed between.  
What worlds they seem to speak, those quiet  
smiles,—

What worlds of sorrow, thought, and doubt, and  
pain,

And flitting joy, that fluttered but to die,  
Like a gaudy butterfly; and struggle grim,  
And final triumph or defeat, and rest  
Calm in the stillness of death, that silent broods  
O'er millions of spirit-worlds, which, dying, burst  
Aflame, and burn still bright, though ages since  
Have passed! Where now the mortal beings, who  
Once strived and sorrowed there, and sought for  
joy,

And found a hollow void, or senseless clay,  
As mortals must, in the stage 'twixt brutish flesh  
Without the breath of spirit-life, and soul  
Dissolved in the primal ether? Where  
The life, the thought, the breath that filled the  
whole

With meaning? All decayed in lumpish clay,  
And burning on that gigantic funeral-pile,  
The world that bore the living forms? All gone?

The men of science have cleared a little space  
In the vast depths of the universe. The stars,  
That have shown like lamps a-light in the dark sky  
Through all the ages since the world began,  
Still shine the same, but we know their distance  
now,  
Even how much matter in them is massed, and what  
They consist of; whither they drift, what relations  
stand  
Amongst them; how they sometime have brighter  
been,  
Or dimmer; how orbs once hot glow no more;  
How orbs once dark and dead now blaze with fire  
Kindled by a sudden collision, world with world,  
Perhaps. We know that a number far too great  
For conception, of masses fiercely hot, and lumps  
Cold and stiff, like the earth and the moon, and  
clouds,—  
Formless — vague — filling immeasurable space,—  
Like Orion's nebula, and galaxies  
Rich in new stars, white-hot from the forge of Time,  
Are bound in a cluster huge, that twists its coils  
Round the neck of Heaven, enclosing the Milky  
Way,  
With its dense star clusters, and shapeless nebulous  
films  
That glimmer afar with light of green or blue,  
Awful in their vast distance;—there hanging huge,  
Unmeasured, infinite to our eyes, the mass  
Is floating onward, bearing us in its folds.  
Yet there is a space beyond it we dimly see,  
That holds in its lap yet other systems, great  
As ours, or greater, mayhap,— we know not.  
Far as we see, yet farther still there lies

More space to be pierced. We know that ages past  
A different universe filled the rayless void  
Of nothing that pens it in. We know that things,—  
All things,—are changing now; that what has been  
No longer is, and that what is will soon  
Give o'er to still other forms we know not of.  
We know that the Earth and her sister planets  
round

Must one day unite with their parent sun again,—  
Where shall we be then?—and that the whole  
universe

May be massed together in one gigantic ball  
Of matter, blazing through the depths of time,  
And throwing a terrible light through the black  
abyss

Of space. So much have the scientists shown us.  
Yet

They have not ripped the veil from the face of  
Truth,

For we know not yet the beginning of things, or the  
end.

Beneath the shallow current of our life  
Here on the earth,—its pleasures, pains, and aims,—  
Lie the deep waters of thought and doubt's unrest;  
And under all, is the firm, hard bed of faith.  
Probe we, with our small strength, the depths of  
space,

And we find no answer to that old question:  
“Whence

Come we, and whither do we go?” Alas  
For him “who strives to *know* where faith should  
trust!”

For assurance to fainting hope and the strong  
desire

That throbs and beats, and longs and longs and longs  
For knowledge that shuts not out the hope of bliss,  
And is never satisfied; to the eternal wish  
To know all things, and far, far more, to find  
A state of peace and tranquil happiness  
And love, we *must* have faith to wait and trust.

### THE WINTER'S PROMISE

“ I will bear ye onward  
Through the darksome night,  
Onward to the sunshine,  
Onward to the light;  
And though my breast is cold,  
And though my face is old,  
Still I'm a faithful guide  
To the place where ye'd abide,  
And I will surely make  
The journey ye would take.”

### “WHAT IS BETTER THAN SUCCESS?”

What is better than success?  
To do your duty,  
Strive your best, without selfishness,—  
There is beauty!  
Say with Odin, “ I will fight,  
Though I'm to fall!”  
Just to struggle for the right  
Is best of all.



## NO, NOT A CYNIC

A cynic, do you ask me? No, not quite!  
A cynic would feel not gladness in that light  
That dips the trees and the grass and everything  
In a golden glow. The wind-song would not bring  
Sweet hope with it, from memory's sunlit hours  
Of musing o'er the new-born wildwood flowers,  
Or from the future, however wild and strange  
It seemeth, since all earth's things forever change.  
There is sadness in the wind, but there is sweet  
As well. Would that everyone might as gladly  
greet  
That sound, as I! But to many and many, I know,  
It brings but sorrow to hear that sighing low.

## THE LOST GLORY

### I

A roseate glory glimmering from afar,  
A warm, rich light empurpling rich-clad boughs;  
More dazzling radiance gleaming in every star,  
Where they shine, gem-like, on Night's soft,  
dusky brows;  
A west-wind blowing wide and free and cool,  
Sweeping o'er valley and hill with deep-toned  
voice;  
Heaven's dear face reflected in every pool,—  
Bright mem'ries of childhood, how they my  
heart rejoice!

## II

Then the strong wind spoke to my heart of heroic  
deeds;  
Then noble shapes were companions in my  
dreams;  
Then I walked with those who sowed in my soul the  
seeds  
Of courage and faith when Hope has hid her  
beams;  
Then I slowly strayed through the green and blos-  
soming fields  
Of Spring, through the Summer's fierce and  
panting heat,  
Through Autumn's woods, where the gay leaf the  
acorn shields,  
O'er the icy hills with the wintry tempests beat;

## III

And my heart quailed not at the thought of dismal  
death,  
And a body in darkness lonely rotting away;  
Young life ran warm in my veins, and warm was  
my breath,  
And in friendship closely knit were the soul and  
the clay.  
But the winds called loud, as they're calling even  
now,  
Not with wail or sigh, but a mystic, moving force  
Calling me on, and I follow, or swift or slow;  
And I follow, till Time shall have ticked my  
earthly course.

#### IV

“ The glory shall come again,” my Spirit cries,  
But her voice is muffled oft in my tired brain;  
I hear her faintly, she only sobs and sighs,  
And adds with her weeping to anxious life’s sad  
pain.  
Yet again, in the silence, she calls, and I hear her  
then,  
And my Faith sleeps as sweetly as child of Joy  
ever slept;  
She bides in my breast unafraid, as in breasts of  
men  
She must ever abide, while the ashes of glory are  
kept.

#### V

Death is a passing, another turn of Change,  
That rolls from our sight forever the friends we  
love;  
From our sight forever, we say, for our bodies  
derange  
The delicate vision our souls brought down from  
above.  
We see them not; but they hover still in our dreams,  
And their wings brush our faces as o’er us they  
nightly bend;  
And patient they wait, till for us the glory gleams  
Once again, and we too know the bliss of life  
without end.

## WHEN HOPE IS GONE

MORAL: Yield not to Despair,  
But fight him in his lair,  
As Great-Heart did!  
Beyond thy trammled view  
Gleams a city fair and true,  
Though its light is hid!

Fast fell the snow. A slender girl, ill-clad,  
And wan with want, and stooping low, and sad  
Of face, strove hard against the wintry blast.  
Shivering, and drawing tight her shawl, she passed  
Along the lonely road. On right and left,  
Moaning as their bleak branches were wrenched  
and reft

By the winds, dark woods rose high. And gleam-  
ing afar,  
Bright lights of a city shone, each a twinkling star  
In the stormy night's void blackness; now fair and  
clear

As morning hope in life's one happy year,  
Now swallowed up in the hollow wind's loud roar,—  
Now bright—now dim—now certain—now no  
more,—

And the wanderer's one haven, Hope, is fled.  
“ Ah, well for me, indeed, were I now dead  
And at rest at last, rather than wandering here,  
Alone in the cold—O God!—all that was dear,  
All, all gone now, and this black night blinding me,  
So never a ray of hope can my poor eyes see!  
That city, 'tis a dream,—a cruel dream  
That mocks me,—for it anon doth refuge seem,

And then is vanished, with all my hope of rest.  
I wander here alone, and sad oppressed  
With doubt and fear, sudden hope and wishes vain,  
Weariness of body and of brain,  
Loneliness, love-longing, life's despair  
Of a life to be lived in a purer and sunnier air!—  
Alone, alone, no shelter, aid, or hope  
To strengthen my lagging steps!—O dark sky, ope  
But a slit in thy gloomy vault, that one little ray  
Of Heaven's sunshine may promise another day,—  
Blest assurance that this black night will not last  
for aye!

O wood, that weepest and wailest and groanest  
always,

O cavernous wood, so dark and deep, art thou  
The only companion of my journey now?  
I shall never reach the city.—Alas, it gleams  
Full bright! From afar the mock of hot hearth-  
lights streams,

That draws me to my doom! The grave yawns  
wide,

A huge, black gulf, 'twixt me and that blest side  
Of this raging river; the fleeting phantom calls,  
Beckons me toward its safe and sheltering walls,  
But I never shall reach it. Nay, here the black  
waters swirl

At my feet, and the city's beyond; no matter; hurl  
Me swift to the death!—Ha, ha!—Naught's be-  
yond; naught's here,

Save the wind and the storm and the wood with its  
branches sere!

Swift, swift!—Stop this brain!—Ah!—I drink the  
deep waters down,

And beneath them—alone and unmourned—I sink  
and drown!—

Help, help!—My breath!—Oh, let me breathe again!  
Come quickly, death!—Oh—come, put an end to  
this pain!—

Ah!—a quiet rocking to and fro—

A babe in cradle—slower and more slow—

Blest sleep—bright dreams—my mother's dear,  
loving face—

A breathless instant hanging in middle space—

A silence—a strangeness—a calling, louder than  
life,

Yet soundless—a blind, bewildered, gentle strife,

As one waking from a deep sleep—a swimming of  
light—

A confusion of heavenly shapes—everything,  
bright—

An instinctive gladness—a wonder—a presence dear

Unseen, yet felt to be loved, and ever near—

Then peace." The city is found; the darksome  
night

Gone and forgot; somewhere in th' unclouded  
light

Of the pure, ethereal heavens, a spirit blest

No longer is vainly seeking a place of rest.

## GLIMMERINGS THROUGH THE MIST

A rosy gleam, a glory throwing  
A wavering brightness from afar!  
A fleeting flash of olden sunshine  
And rays of whiter-sparkling star!

A richly purple mist uprising  
O'er green hill-slopes bathed in sun!  
A sweeter gush of fresher waters,  
That in clearer rivulets run!

A drowsy murmur of the breezes,  
Cool and soft and silvery-sweet,  
As through the air's pure crystal clearness  
Swift they glide on winged feet!

Hush! A faint, uncertain waving,  
As of something in the air!  
A dim sense of some dear presence,  
Unseen in the ether there!

A loving and a glad communion  
With the silence brooding o'er!—  
Glimmerings, these, of life's lost morning,  
Half-remembered dreams of yore.

Fair, indeed, these fleeting glimpses  
Through the vista of the past,  
When our present path is stony,  
And with storm-clouds overcast!

Is the way before us darkened ?  
Is the future veiled from view ?  
Yet those bright lands we remember  
Fade in the farther distance blue.

Past and future meet together  
In the present's narrow span,  
Seeming but a precarious foothold  
To the timid heart of man.

Yet the sun still shines above us,  
And the ground is firm beneath,  
And,—before, behind,—the mountains  
Folded are in a dim-bright sheath.

Nearer draw and parts the curtain,  
Clears away the shimmering mist;  
Tenderly the verdant-sloping,  
Dewy hills with sun are kissed.

Does a fog sometime hang o'er us ?  
Does a storm o'ersweep the sun ?  
Still we know, beyond are lying  
Smiling lands no clouds have won:

Even thus, when the night-hung valley  
Closes us in wintry breath,  
Yet a little way walk onward,  
And we pass the shadow of Death.

And why fear we for the future,  
When the friend of all most dear  
Walks beside us in the spirit,—  
All our lives is ever near ?



First felt in the gentle stirrings  
Of the air in life's bright morn,  
Now, as grows the soul in wisdom,  
Consciousness of her is born.

Warmly wrapping up our hearts here,  
Immortal Love shall bear us on  
Past the gate to Death's dark valley,  
Whither those we mourn have gone.

Fear ye not! The sun will never  
Cease to shine in spirit-land!  
And still, through dimly golden vistas,  
We'll walk with young Love, hand-in-hand!

Still the past, and still the future  
Shall recede before our view,  
But the gently blowing breezes  
Blend the old airs with the new!

## ATHEISM

The land where Atheist dwells is known  
To many and many, these days, I'll own.  
I have been there, too; well I know the way  
To that land so cold, and stern, and gray.  
Yet now I've 'scaped it, and stand without,  
And hear heavenly music round about;  
So now I would tell ye, ye that stay,  
How ye may ope the gate and away.  
Ye're armed with Reason; Reason blocks your way;  
Then with Reason must we endeavor to shake your  
sway.

We must show that the very highest Reason of all  
Is the Faith that waits and works,—or stand,—  
or fall.

Oh, say ye, doubters, that this universe,  
With all its varied hosts of living forms,  
With all the intelligent mortals made of clay,  
Who are born, and grow, and strive, and feel, and  
think,  
And love—ah, love!—and long for eternity  
With the same deep yearning through all the years  
of time,—

Is ruled by chance alone ? drifts pilotless ?  
Is a chaos, heaped together causelessly  
By no wise master, and for no purpose great ?  
Oh, say ye that this good ship listlessly  
Veers with the wind, upon the open sea,  
Nor seeks a port; but idly drifts through space  
And time, dooming its freight of human hopes  
To destruction and everlasting death ?

Is there

No aim at all, no spirit in the mass ?  
Are we so helpless, chained, and bound to earth,  
That we must perish for aye in the wreck of worlds,  
And life cease being ? Is there, then, no soul,  
No spirit ?

We know that life is something. Where  
It is not, lumpy matter heavily lies,  
Moved by no will, commanded by no thought.  
This something is quite intangible; that we know,  
For when one dies, no part of the body is ta'en,  
The weight is the same. For ages we've stood  
agreed

That the soul, if it exists, is thinner than air,—

A nothing—a thought—an idea we cannot grasp.  
Deny its existence? Then what, ah, what, is life,  
And what is death?

Is the body a mere machine,  
Grinding out thoughts and deeds while unim-  
paired,

Weakening with long use, and friction, and rust,  
Till at last its busy wheels are stilled in death?  
Perhaps so; very likely. And is the brain  
But one of the parts of this strangest of machines?  
Very likely, again. But what of the thoughts that  
come

Unsummoned by any need of earthly life?—  
Thoughts of eternity, so wide and vast  
That the brain is bewildered by them; of divinity,  
Glorious, omnipotent, lighting up  
All the world of souls with its radiance;  
Of love that lives when all the stars are dim,  
And finds in the light of God a tranquil peace;  
Of growth from the tiny seed of immortal life,  
Through all the stages of its sojourn in clay,  
Up to the perfect spirit, that has its all  
In love?

Ah, me! 'tis strange we are burdened thus  
For no reason at all; 'tis strange that we should die  
And be buried here in the ground, with all our  
hopes!

If there is a soul, why should it die? We know  
That at death, the clay returns to clay; the dust,  
To dust. There is a natural law which states  
That matter can never be destroyed: then why,  
Oh, why, should we think that spirit can be de-  
stroyed?

Will not the same law hold? Our scientists say

That matter may change its form: that wood is  
burned,  
And remains in ashes or flies away in smoke,  
But still the same amount of matter exists.  
Thus when the body decays, 'tis given back  
To the earth or the air, and exists yet, though re-  
solved  
Into its elements: may not, also, the soul  
Be resolved and purified, yet live through all  
Eternity?

Let that discussion rest.

'Tis merely a theory, put forth full oft.  
Foundations hath it, perhaps—enough. We know,  
We *know*, that from the remotest traces left  
Of life's existence on our earth, its growth  
Hath gradual been, but never-ceasing; thus,  
From the tiny, helpless, microscopic germ  
Of protoplasm,—the ameba, or the first  
Vegetable, indistinguishable, almost,  
From some of the lowest forms of animal life,—  
Through ages of fossil creatures that lived and died,  
Through the age of the wingèd serpent, the mam-  
moth huge,  
The tropical vegetation o'erspreading the earth—  
The slimy seas, the monsters of the deep,  
The unformed continents lying beneath the waves—  
Through age on age ascending, climbing higher,—  
Stretch up to us two long, unbroken lines:  
One, plants; the other, animals; and last,  
That animal most wondrous of them all,—  
*Man*,—who in his pride will scarcely own  
The name of his class.

Is all this goodly growth,—  
This seeming development of a lofty plan,

Pointing up to no less than divinity,—  
To die on the planet that gave it birth, and leave  
No trace, in spirit-existence,—life,—of all  
It hath been? Oh, then, what a loss! Even we  
can see

Much better use for so much good material.  
How useless and wasted, all noble sentiments,  
If destined, anon, to exist no more! Oh, no,  
'Tis folly to be so wise, if wisdom it be  
That brings such a dark conclusion! Let me be  
Content to feel that there is a soul, and, too,  
That the soul is immortal!

Granting there is a soul,  
And that 'tis immortal, then doth the question come:  
Can we think that all these souls just grow and flit  
By chance or their own sweet will? that everything  
Just happens in the spiritual world? Not so  
Is it in the world of matter: natural laws,—  
So we call them,—determine the courses of the stars  
And the planets, to a hair's breadth; nothing is left  
To chance. Were it so, the moon would fall in the  
earth,

The earth in the sun, and all the stars would soon  
Be struggling in chaos. Then why should we  
doubt

That the spirit-world, as well, is ruled by laws  
Unchangeable as gravitation itself?  
And if laws there be to govern, whence do they  
come?

We may not believe in a personal God, as did  
The Greeks and the Romans in days of old; and  
yet

*Some* power, we feel, must be at the helm, if the bark  
Is to steer safe into a definite port. Then what?

Divinity—mere spirit without form,  
Almighty as no personal God could be,  
Full of power, and goodness, and love, and light,  
Yet after all mere spirit without form—  
We cannot apprehend; the thought's too vast,  
Too abstract, for us to grasp. Yet can we see,  
Dimly, something of this; our straining minds,  
Yearning to clasp the infinite, catch some ray  
Of its distant glory, imperfect as they are.  
Humility is better here than pride.  
We understand enough, methinks, to know  
Our own great ignorance. When we see that,—  
Comprehend—admit—it,—then we know  
That Reason had better put on a Quaker garb,  
And cease to vaunt her glories; keep beside  
Her sister, Faith, so meek, serene, and calm;  
And fly no longer in the face of God,  
Till her waxen wings are melted with the heat,  
And down she plunges, like Icarus, in the sea  
Of dark Despair. Then see we, too, 'tis best,—  
Wisest,—to believe that a master spirit rules,  
Whose vastness can suck up the little drops  
We are, as the sky sucks up the dew. 'Tis best  
To believe a beneficent mind is planning good;  
Cherishing purposes that eclipse the stars  
With their splendor; shielding all with equal love;  
And nursing the little germs of life, till full  
Development they reach. How can we be  
Content to believe, for a moment, that this life  
here,—  
So often a failure, so short of perfection aye,  
So burdened with sorrows often, and loaded with  
cares,

So far below what we picture in our dreams,—  
Is all ? or that it must perish forever ? or that  
There can be a universe all drifting on  
Forever, and not for the sake of Eternal Right ?  
Oh, good *must* conquer, and we *must* live, though  
long

The way, and dark, to the blessed home of Truth!  
Reason is good, for she shows us oft the way  
Through caverns dark with superstitious fear,  
Or over mountains, piled of earth, or streams  
Boiling with passion, or icy with prejudice.  
Reason is good; we praise her none too oft,  
For by her search-light thrown o'er all the seas  
Of darkness dangerous the passing years  
Have come to wreck upon, we see the rocks  
They stumbled over, steer with greater care,  
And safely 'scape them; by her guidance, too,  
We sail into the future, and avoid  
Much that others have found of danger there.  
Reason is good; never let us desert  
Her beacon, for she guides us well, not ill.  
But let us be not rash, lest some false guide  
May don her face and voice, and sink us deep  
Beneath the waters of Despondency.  
Reason is good, but she dwells with her sister, Hope  
And she is far too just to spit at Faith,  
And call her vixen, traitor, weakling, fool,  
Because she wears a meeker garb, and seems,  
Blind though she is, to see a heavenly light.  
Reason is good, but Hope is better still,  
And Faith is best of all, for she makes us firm  
In our trust that all that is wrong will be righted  
at last;  
And strong to battle till this life's cares are past.

Then hail! all hail! Rejoice we as one heart,  
As light we go upon our several ways!  
Each one of us has his own especial part  
In carrying out the plan our race to raise!  
Trust on, work on! No thought or labor's wasted  
That tends to elevate us toward perfection!  
Come on, my friends, ye who have bitter tasted,  
We'll set our faces all in one direction!  
Cheerily, cheerily, sing as we go!  
Divinity's destined for us here below!  
On to the work! Onward, on!  
Whither the best before us have gone!  
Forward, march! Keep step and time!  
We'll take our rest in a sunnier clime!  
Rescue the guilty, cheer the sad,  
Heal the sick, and rejoice with the glad!  
Keep still in the line, and onward still,  
Till at last we reach the top o' the hill,  
And breathe a bit in the rarer air,  
Ere we must melt in the ether there!  
Hark to the peal of the organ-chimes!  
Do they not speak of diviner times?  
Slow and solemn; slow  
And sweetly solemn! Oh,  
Methinks, from angels flow  
Such harmonies as they go!  
The silent tears will start  
From the depths of the hardened heart,  
To hear those solemn tones,—  
Those sweetly solemn tones.  
Oh, bliss of God indeed,  
Stirring in Thy seed!



Peace—and rest—at last,  
When this life's cares are past!  
“ In ocean's cave still safe with Thee,  
The germ of immortality!”

## GOOD-NIGHT

Good-night!

The parting day hath ta'en its light  
And left us; now the dark hours keep  
Watch o'er the weary world asleep.

May thy dreams, my love, be bright!  
Good-night!

Good-night!

Truth will win, and Love, and Right.  
Slumber sweetly, care-oppressed!  
God is watching o'er your rest.

May thy dreams, my love, be bright!  
Good-night!





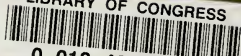




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